

REMARKS

Claims 11-17 are pending. Claim 11 has been amended. Claim 17 is newly presented. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested as it places the application in condition for allowance or at least in better form for appeal.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 11, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,936,753). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 11 recites, in part, an optical transmission system which includes a coupler unit. The coupler unit includes a first optical coupler which divides the first optical signal into a plurality of the first optical signals; a plurality of input/output ports, each of which outputs one of the plurality of first optical signals divided by the first optical coupler to one of the sub units through one of the optical fibers and inputs the second optical signal from one of the sub units through one of the optical fibers; an output port which outputs the second optical signal; and a second optical coupler, provided between the electro-optical converter and the first optical coupler or between the first optical coupler and the input/output ports, which provides the first optical signal to the input/output ports and the second optical signal to the output port.

In contrast, Ishikawa discloses (Figure 1, column 3, lines 50-65) a star coupler 30 and a WDM coupler 28. The star coupler 30 is located in a branching unit 300 and the WDM coupler is located in a central station 100. The branching unit 300 connects the central station 100 to the subscriber stations 200. Ishikawa does not teach or even suggest that the star coupler 30 and the WDM coupler 28 are in a single unit. Accordingly, Ishikawa does not teach an optical transmission system which includes a coupler unit including a first and second optical coupler, as recited in claim 11.

Claims 13 and 14 are believed allowable for at least the same reasons presented above with respect to claim 11 by virtue of their dependence upon claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Ishikawa. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 15 and 16 are believed allowable for at least the same reasons presented above with respect to claim 11 by virtue of their dependence upon claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant appreciates the Examiners indication the claim 12 is allowable. In view of the foregoing, all the claims are believed to be in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any point remains in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 03-3975 under Order No. 7874/280141. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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